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ABSTRACT

Nine schools report in this document on the challenges, successes, and lessons they have experienced while setting up Family Centers and bringing health and social services into their schools. These schools are part of a professional network of urban schools begun and facilitated by the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands through its Designing Schools for Enhanced Learning Initiative. Called the Urban Working Party, this network consists of school teams that include teachers, administrators, other school professionals, parents, and social workers. A profile of each school describes the systems of integrated social services that they are developing. Schools are located in Puerto Rico, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island. Appendix A lists 13 sources for further reading. Appendix B presents an activity to develop critical inquiry skills. Appendix C lists Urban Working Party participants. (SLD)

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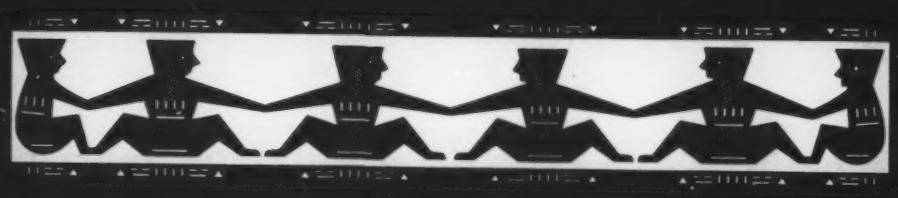

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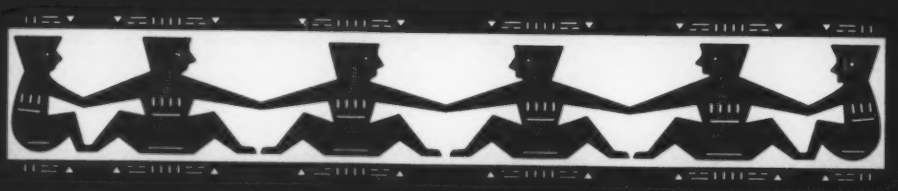

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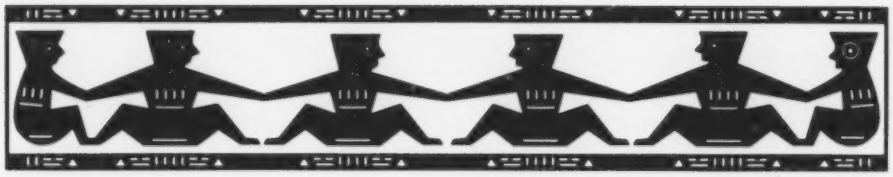

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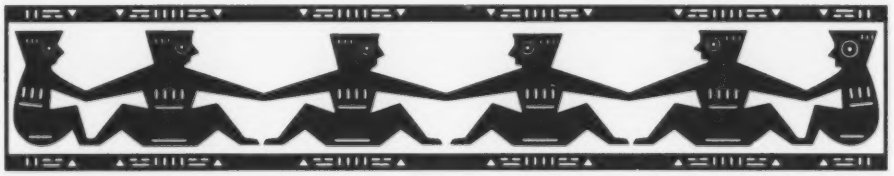

The Regional Laboratory
for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands

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Dedicated to Ron Calloway
1948-1995
who, as a social worker at the
Annie Fisher School in Hartford, Connecticut,
was instrumental to the success of the
Laboratory's Urban Working Party
and helped keep us all focused on
our commitment to improving
the full spectrum of children's lives

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Introduction

"Why is it that our students do not have more successes, despite the teaching efforts we are making? What is holding some of them back? Why so much sadness, so much aggression, so much apathy?"

These heartfelt questions, which emerged from a school staff meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico, echo in faculty rooms and hallways in urban schools throughout the country. Courageous and dedicated urban educators are searching for solutions to such deep-seated problems. In many cases, they are turning to students' families and community social services in their efforts to help students. These educators sense that the aggression, alienation, and failure they are seeing in classrooms are rooted in the challenges of urban living. Elementary school staff members in New Haven, Connecticut, explain the situation:

> *The neighborhood is engulfed with drug trafficking, and the community and school have become closer linked, struggling to protect their youth from the emergence of street gangs. Most of our students live in single-parent homes, and their care is more frequently being assumed by extended families. Thus the school felt a pressing need to accommodate children in ways and time beyond its traditional role. During the spring of 1991, staff, parents, and community rallied to submit a grant proposal to . . . help with a long-range mission: to reform the traditional delivery of education . . . through a collaborative adventure, inclusive of parents and community agencies. Through this type of collaboration, the needs of parents as partners in the education of their children and the needs of their families could be better serviced.*

This school, the Christopher Columbus Family Education Academy, is one of nine schools who report in this document on the challenges, successes, and lessons they've experienced while setting up Family Centers and bringing health and social services into their schools. The nine schools are part of a professional network of urban schools begun and facilitated by the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands through its Designing Schools for Enhanced Learning Initiative. Called the "Urban Working Party," this network consists of school teams which include teachers, principals, administrators, parents, school psychologists, paraprofessionals, social workers, and librarians (see Appendix C for a list of Urban Working Party members).

The Urban Working Party

The Laboratory established the Urban Working Party (UWP) in order to provide a model professional development opportunity to urban educators as they sought to help their students by enlisting community support. The Laboratory invited urban schools committed to education reform to become "partner schools" and to join the Urban Working Party. UWP members agreed to three Laboratory expectations — to:

- Use and share the R&D information and process tools they received at UWP meetings with their peers at their schools
- Incorporate their UWP learnings into school redesign plans that would lead to the integration of social and health services
- Contribute to documents such as this one and foster networks among neighboring schools so that schools outside of this relatively small network could learn from UWP members' experiences

Beginning in January 1993, the UWP met three-to-four times per year for two days. Meetings were varied and full. UWP members engaged in activities to develop inquiry, collaboration, and presentation skills. They also discussed issues with educators who are involved in a variety of approaches to integrating social services, including schools in Cambridge, and Lowell, Massachusetts; Flint, Michigan (a Smart Start school); and Oceanview, California (a Healthy Start school). They viewed videotapes of successful programs in Chicago, rural Kentucky, and Dade County, Florida. In

addition, they studied relevant journal articles and guidebooks, such as *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services* (see Appendix A for other suggested readings).

UWP members appreciated the professional learning opportunities the UWP meetings provided. Away from the hectic pace and constant interruptions of their school grounds; UWP members were able to reflect on their practices and learn from others' experiences. As UWP members from a school in Puerto Rico, Escuela Elemental de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, explain:

> *During UWP meetings we had the opportunity of getting to know and sharing experiences with a diverse group of teachers, administrators, and helping professionals. In these meetings we learned not only about the problems and limitations of the different schools, but also about their successes and potential. Two very important elements that permeated these meetings were trust and mutual respect. Each school became genuinely interested in what the other schools proposed in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. Differences were resolved with dialogue, each side presenting their point of view with no desire to impose it on the others. This helped the members of the teams to reflect, providing new perspectives and new ideas to try out. We all learned through the experiences others had gone through. Tips, ideas, materials, were all exchanged. It was learning, support, and inquiry all in one.*

Inquiry became the tone of UWP conversations, framing key issues and concerns. The Laboratory developed activities designed to improve critical inquiry skills and continually encouraged UWP members to use questions to help each other (see Appendix B for a sample inquiry activity). Between meetings, participants were given reading assignments and asked to apply their UWP learnings in their school settings.

During the UWP's second year, the Laboratory organized a Connecticut "field trip" that enabled UWP members to see model programs in action. They attended an interagency meeting at the Luis Muñoz Marin School in Bridgeport while representatives from the school and various community services discussed how to work

together to help specific students. The Luis Muñoz Marin School participates in Bridgeport Futures Initiative's "Strategic Intervention for High Risk Youth" project. In addition, UWP members were briefed by staff of both the Yale Child Study Center and New Haven School Department on Dr. James Comer's School Development Program (SDP) and toured an SDP school, speaking with staff about the program. For many UWP members, the Connecticut meeting was the pivotal UWP event that ignited a great deal of concrete sharing and action in their respective schools.

In the following pages, nine schools in the UWP describe in their own words how they are developing profamily systems of integrated social services. In other words, how, in their efforts to support students' academic progress, they are finding ways to help stabilize students' families and attend to students' emotional and affective progress. They are learning how to help families know where to go — or providing places at school — for required immunizations, adult job training, psychological counseling, substance abuse treatment, and family counseling. School personnel are also learning to coordinate the community health and social services as well as how to establish Family Centers on site.

The following reports were written as a support for educators, parents, and community representatives who are working to integrate social services in their schools, and, to encourage collegial networking, each report includes a contact name and phone number. The reports, documenting work in progress, were written by dedicated educators who eye the future with a combination of hope, trepidation, uncertainty, and heroic commitment.

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The Dr. Antonio S. Pedreira School is located in an old building in Puerto Nuevo, a middle-class neighborhood in San Juan, Puerto Rico. There is a caring work environment that makes it a good place to be. Of our 375 kindergarten through grade six students, half are from the neighborhood, and half are from several economically and culturally deprived communities within San Juan.

In August 1990, we began to restructure our school, beginning with kindergarten and first grade. We adopted whole language and cooperative learning techniques. Each year we included the next grade in our restructuring efforts. In September 1994, we incorporated the fifth grade. Our curriculum is integrated and is developed by teachers and students around general themes. Our basic premise is that every child, regardless of gender or socioeconomic status, has a talent, and those talents become evident in a rich learning environment. The work has been challenging, and we are very excited.

In January 1992, the Laboratory invited our school to become a partner school. Shortly thereafter, the Urban Working Party (UWP) began. The UWP became our forum for talking about, reflecting, and sharing successes, issues, and problems that we were facing as our project developed. We soon confirmed that despite distance and language differences, all the members of the UWP shared similar problems and dissatisfactions with the results of their efforts. At UWP meetings we considered the idea of Family Centers, and how each of us could adapt a Family Center to meet the needs of our very different schools.

When those of us who represented Pedreira at the UWP meetings started talking about a Family Center with our colleagues at Pedreira, there were many concerns and questions regarding issues such as: space, staff in charge, who would provide services, which services, how to do it, and legal aspects. We were concerned that teachers' burdens would increase. We worried that we might be taking away parental responsibilities, that we would have too many outsiders in the school, that these activities would interrupt teaching and learning. So many questions, but the most important one was missing: Will this be the missing ingredient we have been looking for, that can help students be successful in school and in life?

By sharing our concerns and reflecting on these issues, we began to give some direction to the concept of a Family Center. But each time we met, the whole project seemed more distant. We invested much energy in thinking about physical space. We felt we needed to build a space. We wrote letters and had blueprints made. We contacted outside agencies, who thought it was an interesting concept, but nothing else. How could we ally with others for this effort? How could we help all staff see the project as a whole?

We developed a questionnaire for a self-study that asked staff for their perceptions of various school components. With the help of collaborators, we organized workshops called "Building Relationships" in which we reflected on our goals, objectives, practices, roles, and achievements. Many concerns were aired. But the most important outcome was sharing a genuine concern for our students.

> *"Why is it that students do not have more successes, despite the teaching efforts we are making? What is holding some of them back? If they are all talented, how come some don't show their talents? Why can some do something today, but not tomorrow? Why so much sadness, so much aggression, so much apathy?"*

The experience of these staff meetings was like being at a UWP meeting, except that these questions came from teachers at the Pedreira School. We also discussed the services already offered to these students by the school. Many teachers expressed dissatisfaction with these services. They disliked having students taken out of the classroom. Even more, they disliked being kept uninformed of the issues affecting individual students. Teachers complained that they did not see any improvement. They wanted to know what was

being done with specific students. Yet the service providers felt that teachers seldom had any time to be kept abreast of what was going on with a particular student.

Both were valid statements. How can we provide effective services? What other components are needed to make this work? What tools can we use to promote communication between teachers and other service providers? How can we make that communication effective? If our philosophy stems from the belief that a child is an integral being, then why don't we see the family as part of that scheme? Or, if we do, why have we not found ways to include families in the school?

We do what so many schools do. We hold meetings, talk to parents, and refer them to other services, and then repeat the cycle with the same results. We could photocopy our needs assessment studies from year to year! The problems are the same. What should we do?

Our questions created other questions, which the staff discussed in small groups: What have you as a teacher done in your classroom? What has given good results? Why? What do you think has been a waste of time? Talking to parents? Meeting with them? Were your conversations with them effective? When you listened to their problems and wrote down notes, what did you do with your notes? Will they become part of the statistics to justify another student failure? Is that our objective? Are others asking the same questions? How can these questions become the basis for action?

A group of us organized all the concerns that surfaced in the small group discussions so that we could see them as a whole. We saw that there was a need to use other strategies to help children succeed. As a result, we brought more services to the school. While all these meetings were going on, we continued thinking about the physical space for a Family Center. We continued seeking ways to create a Family Center.

In 1993 we were able to make nurses' services from Metropolitan University available at the school. Because parents needed to be present for their children to receive services, more parents began coming into the school. Although it was evident that there was a great need, the focus of the services provided was not meeting that need. Therefore, at the end of the school year, we met with Professor Evelyn García and the nursing students of Metropolitan University

and together went over the program of work of the school and our needs assessment study. We conceptualized in an integrated way, and we visited several agencies. We prepared a new plan of work and objectives for the Family Center. We added the concept of prevention, since we felt that we needed to organize activities that promoted positive parent-children-school-community practices. In this way, we could lower the crisis rate in the future.

Some may think that this process has taken a long time. We have not stopped. We have been doing the work while the concept of a Family Center has been maturing. Now, an actual physical structure for the Family Center is not that important to us. Because we reorganized the Chapter One program around in-classroom services, we were able to free up some space for a Family Center. From here we expect parents to join us to work together for a better future.

On October 27, 1994, we inaugurated our Family Center. We had posters to announce its opening. We held health clinics, recreational activities, and had gifts and bulletins for participants. We held a general meeting for parents. That evening one father offered to provide his services as a psychologist, free of charge, on Fridays from 8 to 12. On that same evening, other parents requested the psychological service.

We have also organized counseling activities for students and parents. In addition, we are organizing a parent volunteer corps representing our students' different neighborhoods to serve as a link between the community and the Center. They will spread the word about activities, successes, and needs, and attract more parents to the Center.

All of this activity has occurred with only volunteer help, no special funding. Students of dentistry, nursing, pediatric medicine, speech therapy, and optometry offer their services at the Center. We feel we have taken a big step. It has been a real challenge. Sharing with the members of the UWP has been a source of inspiration. We have groups within the school that have an advanced understanding, and this has helped. It is important to elaborate a document of services to keep the team informed. We need to collect information on the process and the product.

We need teachers to be part of the process. Since our students stay in school from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., we plan to ask the School Council to

suspend classes one day a month. Restructuring requires that staff have time to create and re-create, think and rethink, share, evaluate and reevaluate all that we are doing. We will also be searching for funding in order to pay small fees to teachers and parents who collaborate after school hours. Dr. Rosita Marazzi of the Laboratory has offered to help us write the proposal.

Right now the Center is coordinated by the counselor and the social worker. Although they are enthusiastic and interested, they have other tasks and roles. Therefore we have approached the Office of Family Services of San Juan to ask that they assign a coordinator to our school to work in the Center.

Soon we will begin publishing a newsletter to disseminate the Center's services. We will ask for the collaboration of all the parents. We want the Center to be a place where parents can feel happy, meet informally, have coffee, share thoughts, and help teachers and students. For us, the Center is the engine. Our goal is to have the whole school regarded as a Family Center, where we can all help each other.

We still have many needs. We need to share with other schools. We want to know the documents and formats that they are using about processes, outcomes, evaluations, recommendations, interests, and services. We want to expand our ideas. We are just beginning our journey.

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Barbieri School is an elementary school located in Framingham, Massachusetts. The population of 575 students is composed of 343 White, not of Hispanic origin, and 232 minorities, of which the Hispanic population is the majority, 180. Other minorities represented include: 3 American Indian, 27 Black, and 22 Asian students (school enrollment report 1994).

The students represent a wide variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, from very affluent to homeless children living in shelters and scattered sites. Barbieri School has a highly transient population. It has a standard curriculum, a two-way bilingual program, and three special education classes for developmentally delayed children. A kindergarten through third grade Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program existed at Barbieri until June 1994. However, because of overcrowding and redistricting, the TBE program is no longer at Barbieri.

Having a diverse staff which includes bilingual teachers, administrators, and support personnel is representative of our commitment to meet the needs of our student body. A social worker, counselor, and psychologist provide group and individual counseling to students, as well as consultation to parents and teachers. Support groups are formed according to existing needs, such as divorce and separation, death and dying, incarceration, and so on. Parents are often referred to outside agencies that can assist them with their particular problems and concerns. Services are provided through a team effort, and the following support teams have been established:

School Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN)

The SCAN team is composed of the principal and/or assistant principal, school nurse, social worker, counselor, psychologist, and classroom teacher of the student under review. It functions to ensure that children have a physically and emotionally safe environment at home. It is a vehicle for reporting child abuse and/or neglect cases. Teachers are supported by the SCAN team when making referrals.

Crisis Team

Guidelines for prevention, intervention, and postvention are outlined to deal with crises such as death and suicidality. The team helps teachers become aware of changes that may constitute warning signs of potential at-risk behavior.

Child Abuse Prevention Program (CAPP)

This is a preventative and remedial education program delivered to each class in the school by trained school support personnel, such as the counselor, social worker, psychologist, home-school liaison person, and classroom teacher. School personnel have delivered this program for ten years at Barbieri using a program from California called Child Assault Prevention Program. Parental consent for each child participating is required. Its aim is to prevent or stop abuse whether physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional. Support personnel come into the classroom and role-play specific incidents depicting appropriate and inappropriate responses when confronted in situations such as being approached by a stranger, a bully, or sexual abuse. It teaches children that their rights are taken away when they are violated or mistreated. It encourages children to say no to abuse and to communicate with parents or a trusted adult.

Health Education Program

The health education program in Framingham has been revised, refining the curriculum for classroom instruction. Different aspects of human sexuality are included for grades four and five. A new program is presently being developed for parents of kindergarten through grade three students to help them instruct their children, and be prepared to respond to questions and concerns about sexuality.

Team Process

Barbieri support staff work as a team with classroom teachers, parents, and administrators to help children that have been identified as having academic and/or emotional problems. The team tries to solve problems using the four-step approach. Recommendations are

made to help meet student needs. Help may be provided in the form of counseling, speech, remedial reading, testing with parental consent, and, if needed, special education intervention.

The Family Learning Center

Previous efforts to encourage family participation date back to 1975, when a federally funded grant was awarded to involve Hispanic parents in the school. This included a component for early stimulation of preschool children at home, as well as parents' rights and responsibilities awareness training, which empowers parents to fully participate in the educational process. Due to lack of funding, the project was terminated; however, a former participant was hired as a bilingual home/school liaison. In 1991, a town-wide Family Learning Center was established, and it was relocated to Barbieri in 1994.

The Center serves all Framingham parents and shares its space with the school's Parent Teacher Organization. This space is used throughout the school year by parents and school staff for a variety of activities. Members can work on small projects or hold a committee meeting here. A school professional staff member can meet with a parent in the center, so that any child accompanying the parent can be kept occupied with the toys, children's books, and craft materials in the Center during the conference.

Every Wednesday morning, the Parent, Infant, and Toddler Group meet for an informal session of networking, support, and socialization. A "brown bag" parents' discussion group will be meeting on Wednesdays at noon. On Tuesday evenings, the Center will provide supervised child care during the two-hour parent training classes, which are held in another area of the school.

Our Center serves as both a meeting/work space and a parent/staff resource room. An open, standing file offers up-to-date information on family, school, health, and community issues. Handouts, pamphlets, and parenting periodicals are always available to parents. There is a lending library of parenting books and resources for teachers. Toys, children's books, and learning games may also be borrowed.

After School Programs (AFTA)

The AFTA program is an educational, tutorial, and enrichment program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education under the McKinney Act, a federal grant allocating funds for homeless and at risk youth. It was housed at Barbieri for the first year and a half

due to the overwhelming number of shelters and scattered sites within that district.

For school year '94-'95, Framingham Public Schools committed itself to a large redistricting project. This has scattered the shelters, the sites, and the prevention units across town. Due to a one-third cut in funding, the program has had to limit its tutorial staff, the days in session, and the number of children it can service. At present, the home site will still be the Barbieri School with four tutors servicing grades one through five.

This year, there's a satellite program for preschool and elementary school children at the SAGE House shelter in town. The coordinator is seeking local funding to bring a handful of Woodrow Wilson school children to the Barbieri program, and to begin a program at the McCarthy school in January, when construction is finished.

The program provides snack, transportation, in-house activities, field trips, gym, and art. Fifty percent of the program needs to be tutorial to follow the criteria of the Department of Education. There is no cost to the parent or guardian for participation. Homeroom teachers, in-house support services, and outside agencies make recommendations to the program coordinator.

Sandy Corcoran, AFTA Coordinator, can be reached at Barbieri (508) 626-9172 or her counseling office: (508) 875-9501.

Comments and Conclusion

We are fortunate to work in a school system where so many support services are provided for our students and their families. Support services and abuse preventive programs are maintained at the Barbieri School on an ongoing basis. The staff maintains a close relationship with community services and home/school partnerships.

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PS/IS, The Charles Hamilton Houston School, is located in the heart of Brownsville-Brooklyn, New York. Charles Hamilton Houston School is the safe haven for 857 students from the surrounding projects and walk-ups. The student population is predominantly African-American (58%) and Hispanic (42%). Although an outsider may see the surrounding area of the school in a dim light, our stars at the Charles Hamilton Houston School shine brightly! The atmosphere of the building is warm and inviting, especially to our children with special needs. Considering the fact that we have a "barrier-free" building (elevator, ramps, etc.), the children with physical challenges are not considered the "exception," but are accepted and appreciated by peers and staff alike.

Our bilingual classes service children from Puerto Rico, Central America, and Mexico, in kindergarten through grade five. ESL is provided for all our pre-kindergarten through grade eight children, including our few Haitian-Creole students.

At times when you glance out the window to admire "the scenery," you realize then and only then that our students are safe within these walls. They can be children within these walls, and grow without fears and find consistency within these walls. Amidst the burned-out and vacant buildings and ills of society, there we stand as an oasis of the community. At Charles Hamilton Houston School, we not only service the children, but family members as well! Inside the walls of the oasis, you will find "a whole group of adults that can be trusted!"

We are a Chapter One/School Wide Projects school, which lends itself in our favor (for the most part). We have a say into the spending/appropriating of our budget. There is the flexibility to create programs or positions to better service and enhance the educational needs of our children. However, we *do* face, as all other public schools, the possibility of cuts in our budget. Thus, a perfect plan can go down the tubes — until next year.

The road to integration of social services in the school is closely linked to the school's journey in restructuring. In the closed door atmosphere of the early 1980s, few questions were asked by teachers, and very few attempts were made to include teachers and parents in the educational decision making process. Classroom doors were closed. No opinions were offered.

By the late 1980s, at the same time as a change in school administration was occurring, a collaborative effort of the United Federation of Teachers, Board of Education, and the federal government was initiated to encourage teachers, parents, and administrators to join together in the educational decision making process for their children. With the beginnings of empowerment came unrest and many questions. Who would be making the decisions? How would we go about it? Why aren't the children achieving? These questions generated the search for a vehicle for change. We contacted the Office of Equal Opportunity and acquired the services of a consultant to help us come together and compose a vision. How do we bring together groups of teachers and parents who are not used to trusting each other and learn to talk honestly? Our first experience with a retreat showed us what a powerful tool that can be. Leaving the school site behind we traveled to a conference center for the weekend and with the help of our consultant began to talk and listen to each other. It was at this time that we identified ourselves as a Community School, that our vision was one that brought the community into the school to support the education of our children, recognizing that we could not work in isolation of the community.

The following year we decided to participate in the School Based Management Initiative. We were not accepted that first year, but tried again the following year to enter into the Chapter One School Wide Initiative Program. This time we asked for help and received outside facilitation from the New York City Teacher Centers Consortium. Through the help of a facilitator we learned how to organize a team and begin to plan together. We again realized the

value of bringing the school community together away from the school site at a retreat. This time, with the assistance of consultants, we concentrated on team building. We were slowly turning a faculty into a family.

At this time, the New York State Department of Education offered $100,000 Community School Grants to schools who could compose a plan which would make the school a focal point of the community and utilize the resources of the community in the education of its children. Now we had two grants to write and only one person, our principal, who had experience with writing grants. We searched out all the grant writing workshops that were offered, and a team of teachers plunged in and learned to write grants while we surveyed staff and parents to learn how to improve student achievement.

Feedback was surprising and didn't indicate a new menu of academic programs. Doctors working in an environmental center camp which our students attended, reported that a surprisingly high number of students suffered from asthmatic conditions. We reviewed increasing numbers of referrals of children for evaluation for special education services. The number of new admissions from other countries was growing. Parental involvement in school activities was low. Parents were voicing concerns about their own parenting skills. More children were being admitted missing basic immunization. The population of foster children and children in shelters had increased. It was becoming increasingly clear that the school needed support. Our grant applications had to include plans for reassessing services already in the building and reaching out to agencies in the community for assistance. The way to help the child would be to support the family. Our grants were approved, and the job of implementation began.

The Community School proposal had called for a coordinator, and we were soon to see what a vital role that person would play. It would be her job to locate services which would satisfy identified needs. Many agencies, including hospitals, local medical providers, religious organizations, rehabilitation centers and colleges, were anxious to form alliances with the school. It was only a matter of working through the bureaucracy and red tape.

With each affiliation and contact, the job of coordinator became more complicated. Groups were planning activities independent of each other and courting parent participation. Splinter groups of par-

ents were forming depending on which group they were affiliated with. We needed to bring them all together. A Parental Task Force was formed to help coordinate activities while unifying different parent groups. This Task Force assisted in the creation of a monthly activities calendar and news bulletin informing parents of workshops and activities planned for the month by the different services. Our PTA room became the Family Center. This is the site for workshops and planning sessions. It is shared by all the groups working with parents and run by parents. The Task Force also planned for special events to involve more parents. Our first effort was Agency Night. We invited representatives of health agencies, utility companies, legal services, and local politicians to be at tables providing information to parents about community services. We put fliers into the community, sent letters home, made phone calls, and were surprised and pleased at the turnout. This event was so successful, we now plan an Agency Night each year.

When we were almost at the end of our first three-year School Wide Initiative Program and Community School plan, the school was invited by the New York City Teacher Centers Consortium to attend a Laboratory-sponsored conference, "Designing Learner-Centered Schools." The conference was a wonderful professional experience. We cemented our relationship with the Laboratory by becoming a partner school and eventually an action research site. This affiliation provided us the opportunity to become a member of the Urban Working Party (UWP). It became evident after the first UWP session that we were all saying the same thing. The needs of the family must be addressed to improve the education of the child, and teachers were not prepared to take on this effort alone, without outside support. Even though we were all at different stages and approaching the problem in different ways, a support system had been formed. Through exposure to current research, conference calls with staff involved in model programs, visits to schools implementing programs, and time to talk with each other and share stories, we are learning from each other. This "critical friends" network helps us renew our own efforts.

We wrestle with the issues of time to plan, space to house services in the school, the changing parent population, changing staff members, money, assessment, etc. . . . With each question that is answered, it seems two new ones take their place. We worry about today and the future. How do we keep what we started yesterday going until tomorrow.

Christopher Columbus Family Education Academy
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Christopher Columbus Family Education Academy, once known as Christopher Columbus Elementary School, is located in the Fair Haven section of New Haven, Connecticut. The latter being a city of dual personas. On the one hand, New Haven is the home of Yale University with an abundance of cultural, intellectual, medical, and economic resources, thus projecting an affluent middle/upper class structure. On the other hand, we find a city struggling economically as the fourth poorest city of its size, with thirty-one percent of its overall population below the national poverty level. New Haven is infested with drug-related gangs and violent crimes that continue to soar, plaguing and involving its youth. New Haven has yet another blight: it has recently been ranked second only to Washington DC (statistically) in the area of infant mortality and first in the incidence of AIDS on a per capita basis.

Our school is a kindergarten through grade four elementary school with an enrollment of 380 students, who reside in the Fair Haven community. This community has 14,000 people; a large percentage of residents are of Latino background. The Columbus School provides bilingual education at each of the kindergarten through grade four levels. Of the 16 classrooms, 10 are bilingual and 6 are English only. The school provides part-time special education classes with an emphasis on inclusion and provides all the necessary services for those children with special needs. (The school psychologist, school social-worker and speech therapist are all part-time staff.)

The neighborhood is engulfed with drug trafficking, and the community and school have become closer linked, struggling to protect their youth from the emergence of street gangs. Most of our students live in single-parent homes, and their care is more frequently being assumed by extended families. Thus the school felt a pressing need to accommodate children in ways and time beyond its traditional role. During the spring of 1991, staff, parents, and community rallied to submit a grant proposal to the Melville Corporation to help with a long-range mission: to reform the traditional delivery of education at Columbus School through a collaborative adventure, inclusive of parents and community agencies. Through this type of collaboration, the needs of parents as partners in the education of their children and the needs of their families could be better serviced. The vision was born by the commitment of the staff, parents, and community and began to be realized in March, 1992, when Columbus was awarded a Melville Corporation Innovation grant totaling $150,000 over a three-year period.

Prior to receiving the grant monies, our school had been developing a site-based management process as part of the New Haven Public Schools Project Excel Program initiated six years ago with the support and direction of Dr. James Comer's School Development Program. During the last two years of Project Excel, the strength and commitment of parent involvement had grown substantially. The school, with its parent input, had taken a hard look at the strengths and needs at Columbus and from that, the direction for a reform plan emerged.

As part of the reform efforts, we have moved away from five separate grades (K-4) to the idea of "the developmental classroom" with two levels: primary and intermediate. Although we still have a strong bilingual program, all classes are integrated so that theme, units, and skills are interwoven throughout the day. The teacher's role has evolved to that of class facilitator, directing the students through the day's activities. Our focus is strong in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics; however, the staff doesn't teach these subjects in isolation but rather as part of the whole tapestry of learning. Classes in both Spanish and English enjoy the same multicultural curriculum, and learning centers are found in every classroom.

As part of the Melville Innovation Grant restructuring program, Columbus School implemented many social services, which are firmly in place at this time. Several workshops and/or training ses-

sions have been coordinated with Centro San Jose, a local social service agency and one of our strongest supporters. Other agencies in New Haven have conducted workshops for interested parents including: New Haven Family Alliance, Farnam Neighborhood House, The Family Advocacy Program, Chapter One Family Reading Program (Spanish/English), GED classes from New Haven Adult Education Department, and the Fair Haven Health Clinic. The latter has ongoing sessions on health needs for our families. Along with the community agencies' input, our parents and their families are also offered exposure to cultural events sponsored by Casa Otoñal and Casa Julio de Burgo at Yale University.

Our strongest component in our reform efforts is the Parents as Educators Group (PAE). This group of parent volunteers receives ongoing training throughout the school year. This year alone, 1994-95, we have 20 new PAE volunteers who have been trained to assist teachers in the various classrooms. This is a strong, adventurous undertaking that links our parents with staff and promotes a supportive, positive environment for learning. When parents complete PAE training, a stipend is given for their time at the sessions. The training is based on a whole language approach. Through the PAE Program, parents' self-esteem and attitudes have changed. They now feel an integral part of the school community, and this is important to them as adults.

We have also provided a Parents' Center, a room that parents can call their own, at our school. We understand that our parents have their own needs and wants, and when these are met, the lives of the children become more stable. It is this realization that has us collaborating in many ways with a variety of local social service agencies to address families' issues. This year, we are fortunate to receive the services of a clinician from the Yale Child Study Center for five hours per week. She counsels and supports families in crises who ask for assistance. In this way, those who are in need become clients of Yale Child Study Center but have the convenience of being serviced here at our school. This is especially important, since most of our families do not have easy access to transportation.

Staff and parent training is crucial to the success of reform. Some of the workshops offered include: Diversity; Active Learning Centers and Making Them Work; Thematic Units; Special Education Guidelines and Format; Using Math Manipulatives; Child Abuse: Making the Hurt Stop; Project Prism (science instruction in bilingual

classes); Cooperative Group Training; Writing Box Workshop and coaching; Banners Training (literature); Science Place Training; and Rigby Literacy 2000 Project.

Columbus was invited to become a partner school of the Laboratory and to participate in the Urban Working Party (UWP). Through the UWP sessions, teachers had the opportunity to learn new skills and strategies to effect the vision for success. Participation in Laboratory workshops and sharing sessions has helped us identify our needs, savor our successes, and work on areas of weakness. Contacts made via the Laboratory serve as networking opportunities for our staff and parents.

What does the future hold? Our vision is stated in the mission of the school. The school today is not that of 20 years ago, for that matter of three years ago. We have become an extension of family. We have, in a very real sense, replaced the extended family to most of our population. Our parent volunteers play an active role in their children's academic future. We direct, redirect, and locate assistance for our children's needs. If it can't be provided here at school, we find the community resources available for help. The school provides a safe haven for all our students. Our families are comfortable coming into Columbus to request aid and seek assistance. They'd rather come to us than go elsewhere in the city. We speak their language, and explaining things to them is often easier than trying to find someone that can explain. True, we are here to educate children, children are first, but it is the entire child that needs to be educated. Areas such as social development, ethical outlook, and becoming purposeful, useful citizens in our society are important aspects of our students' educations. Their families are important to us. By incorporating school and community, we can share the responsibility for their futures.

The following questionnaire has been used as part of an ongoing assessment valuing parental input to our school program.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS FAMILY EDUCATION ACADEMY

Parent Questionnaire

1. How do you see yourself involved in your child's education?
   very involved, somewhat involved, silent supporter, not interested, no comment

2. How do you feel coming into Columbus School?
   very comfortable, somewhat relaxed, frightened, don't come enough, no comment

3. How do you communicate with your child's teacher(s)?
   very well and often, sometimes and OK, rarely, by note only, not at all, no comment

4. Would you like to volunteer at school? *yes/no*
   What special thing would you like to do? List:

5. Are you available for field trips? *yes/no*
   Best Time(s)_____

6. What do you think of the Parents As Educators Program at Columbus?

7. Do you agree with the policies and philosophy of our school?
   yes/no

8. Do you like having the Parents' Center? How best can this room be used?

9. Do you support the principal and her staff implementing changes at Columbus?
   yes, always, most of the time, sometimes, not often, not at all, no comment

10. Do you come to school to seek out advice, information or other help that doesn't deal with your child? *yes/no*
    Who do you see for this?

Other Comments:

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In our school we didn't mean to start out by helping families or establishing a Family Resource Center. We just wanted to look for and implement alternatives that could help our students be more successful in their learning process.

Escuela Elemental's mission is to serve as laboratory school to the College of Education of the University of Puerto Rico. It is a small school, with an enrollment of approximately 200 kindergarten through sixth grade students from the community at large, including children of University personnel. During the early '90s a new admissions policy, low academic scores, discipline problems, staff burnout, and other factors made us aware that our school needed to get involved in a restructuring process. Looking for solutions, the kindergarten teacher brought whole language into our school. One of our faculty members, with a special education background, developed a project to help children who were not succeeding academically. The university administration provided for the opening of a guidance counselor position in the school. A new school principal, Dr. Aura Ramírez, came aboard. Finally, to tie all these events together, our school became a partner school of the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands.

The experience in our first two encounters with other partner schools in Laboratory-sponsored activities shifted our vision from being academically centered to being centered on the whole child. This meant that we couldn't close our eyes to the problems and

needs the child's family was going through which affected his/her behavior and performance in school. The family provides a child's first educational experiences. We became aware that we needed to help parents if we wanted them as partners with a common goal: to develop a healthy, creative, and successful individual. We had to help families develop, maintain, and/or improve necessary skills so they could do their part. Yet we realized we were being asked to go beyond our roles as teachers by becoming psychologists, family counselors, social workers, and health professionals. We understood we had to work in two directions: remediating and preventing. At first we just hoped to offer direct counseling services (or psychological ones through referrals) to students who were in need of these services. We wanted to address specifically problems such as: low self-esteem, low academic achievement, child abuse, and aggressive behavior.

It didn't take long to realize that we had to expand the range of services toward preventive or proactive interventions without losing the perspective of offering the remedial services that were needed in the beginning. Then we decided to influence the student, but this time including help for his/her family circle.

At that point our school was asked to join the Urban Working Party (UWP) sponsored by the Laboratory. The school counselor, Héctor Claudio, with the special education teacher, María Ruiz, attended the first meeting. Although there were schools from as far apart as Maine, Buffalo, and Puerto Rico, we found that we shared many of the same problems and were all struggling to find possible solutions. It became evident that schools could become the axis for the various services that outside agencies could provide the child and the family. Each school developed their own idea of the concept according to the population it served and their needs.

In our school, the principal, the guidance counselor, and the special education teacher promoted the idea that we had to look at the whole child if we wanted to help him or her. We had to get to know children beyond the classroom. Team meetings, in which teachers discussed cases, evolved naturally.

Team meetings were held for various children with diverse problems, and specific needs were identified. Most of the time, parents were present at these meetings, as were the school counselor, the special education teacher, and the principal. We started by identify-

ing resources that could help us serve the child and the family. These resources included government agencies, community and support services, available professionals within the University system, and volunteers, among others. The school made arrangements to offer some services to the children and the parents, but in most cases, we made referrals to the appropriate agencies. This was the beginning of our Family Resource Center.

The different points of view presented at these meetings helped teachers discover the whole child. Parents realized that teachers were interested in helping the child and the family. Recommendations were reached by consensus of parents and teachers. The school counselor made sure that everybody signed a written document of the meeting. He was also responsible for referrals to outside agencies and for following up on cases. At times, other professionals involved in cases were invited to attend team meetings.

The team meetings enabled the administration to discover the needs of the families and the children. No formal needs assessment was done. The parents talked about their problems requesting support, ideas, and help to overcome them. The problems that the school tried to help with included: nutrition, mental health, academics, before- and after-school care, and parenting.

Although we started by identifying children with specific needs, we ended up involving the entire community. For example, a teacher referral to the guidance counselor based on suspected child abuse triggered a series of events that included: team meeting of teachers, making contact with social services as well as a child abuse community agency; parent interviews; a workshop for teachers on child abuse; workshops for parents on becoming better parents; and referral to family therapy services. Trying to help one child provided us with the opportunity to change our role as educators, reaching not only that child, but the entire school community.

Based on the different needs we discovered, the school developed various programs. The special education teacher developed an after-school tutoring program which uses peer tutoring as well as University student volunteers. In order to provide after-school care, the school started various offerings in an extended school day program including: chess (a University student who is a chess champion); young artists (led by the art teacher); theatrical games (a father who is also a drama professor); volleyball and basketball

teams; library aides (led by the librarian); and a 4H club (led by a mother).

After realizing most of our students ate no breakfast, we were able to obtain free breakfast service for all our children, since they qualified. Doctors diagnosed many children with particular health problems that require special diets such as hypoglycemics, diabetics, problems with lactose, cholesterol, and ulcers. Special lunches are being provided to these children free of charge through a special program. The administration has made sure that all children enrolled in the school have had physical, hearing, visual, and dental examinations, as well as vaccinations. Parents who can pay, take their child to private doctors. Those who cannot are referred to free services. As a result of the students needs, services offered, and data we need to maintain, the school has developed a new, more comprehensive cumulative record which provides for a more holistic view of the child.

The parents know all this is done in strict confidentiality. They are closer to the school, and they are becoming more involved. They feel they can open up and discuss personal problems knowing we won't judge or criticize, that we will try to do our best to offer support, to help the child deal with the situation, and to make referrals to appropriate agencies that can help the family. Parents are also feeling the school cares about them, so they, in turn, seem to care more about the school. They give ideas, suggestions, and also their time and effort. Recently, as a result of the efforts of one mother, we obtained some trees from a government agency to plant in our yard. We asked families to come on a Saturday morning with their picks and shovels to help us plant about 100 trees and flowering plants. Not only fathers and mothers, but aunts, uncles, and grandparents came. It was a beautiful sight to see them "take over" the school. Administrators, teachers, students, and their families felt like one big family. We believe the activity's success is evidence of the change in vision our school has had as a result of UWP workshops.

During UWP meetings we had the opportunity of getting to know and sharing experiences with a diverse group of teachers, administrators, and helping professionals. In these meetings we learned not only about the problems and limitations of the different schools, but also about their successes and potential. Two very important elements that permeated these meetings were trust and mutual respect. Each school became genuinely interested in what the other schools

proposed in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance. Differences were resolved with dialogue, each side presenting their point of view with no desire to impose it on the others. This helped the members of the teams to reflect, providing new perspectives and new ideas to try out. We all learned through the experiences others had gone through. Tips, ideas, materials, were all exchanged. It was learning, support, and inquiry all in one.

Although the faculty was not kept posted on all the proceedings of the Urban Working Party, the way the school counselor and the special education teacher slowly developed the concept of the Family Resource Center affected the whole school. Readings, as well as ideas, were shared both formally and informally with the teachers and parents. Letting the teachers and parents experience some ideas for themselves was better than convincing them with a lot of information and formal meetings. This also permitted the concept to evolve according to not only what we had in mind, but also according to the immediate needs and available resources of the school community.

We have started to serve our children and their families. Most of our teachers are convinced of the need to go beyond academics, of getting to know students' personal and family histories in order to help them develop their potential to the fullest. We can now say our school has become a Family Resource Center.

Up to now we have needed no money, no additional facilities. We have only provided substitutes for the teachers when a team meeting has been scheduled. We would like to eventually have a coordinator so the guidance counselor can devote himself to more direct services.

The Urban Working Party gave the stimulus and helped us to conceptualize the project. At times it felt like a jigsaw puzzle. There were parts all over, but we didn't see the connections. Now, almost two years later, we see the entire picture. There are still some pieces missing, but we know we are on the right track.

Grove Avenue Governor's School
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In November 1989 when the faculty of Grove Avenue School was asked what was most needed to positively impact our students' academic performance, the overwhelming response was "a social worker." The overall lack of student success in school, and our inability to deal with it, were dragging us down! It was apparent that many of our children were suffering from the stresses associated with troubled families coping with difficult life problems. Grove's performance on standardized tests was the lowest in the district in reading and math, primarily the result of the bilingual make-up of the student population. Serious discipline problems pervaded the school, and everyone's morale was low! Curriculum learning strategies and school organization could, at best, be described as traditional and textbook-centered and featured drill and practice worksheets. There was little in the way of instructional supplies, and technology equipment was limited to two Apple IIe computers in each intermediate grade classroom. Identifying the need for emotional support for our children and their families and not having the resources to provide it fueled our pursuit to be designated a Rhode Island Governor's School.

The Governor's School Program was conceived to determine if decisions made through school-based management (SBM), decisions made closest to the student, would improve student performance. SBM is not an end in itself, but a means to an end — improved student performance with decision making that impacts the teaching/learning process. The abstract of our successful Governor's Schools proposal outlines that through school-based management, we would "improve the academic, physical, social skill development of [our] students."

Grove Avenue School, which serves 275 first through sixth grade students, is located in the center of the city of East Providence, Rhode Island. The school is comprised of two separate buildings, located across the street from one another. One of the buildings is leased from the St. Francis Xavier Church, the parish church of the community's Portuguese Catholics. All written communication is sent home in both English and Portuguese to better serve the 33% of our families who require Portuguese translations. There are several children from Latino, Russian, and Southeast Asian families adding to the rich cultural diversity of the school community. The thirteen standard classroom teachers are supported by four English as a Second Language teachers and two Chapter One teachers. Grove Avenue School has the highest free and reduced lunch eligibility in the district.

Based on the evidence of Dr. James Comer of Yale that "school-based management and family support services work to create caring communities where learning can take place," our restructuring plan is comprehensive and addresses every aspect of the learning environment, from a developmentally-appropriate, language-based curriculum to instructional strategies that promote active learning, critical thinking, and problem solving. We now know that our children can learn, because we now know how to teach them. The school slogan, adapted from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, is "All kids can learn, so if they don't learn the way we teach, then we must teach the way they learn."

During the first year of the Governor's Schools Program, Grove was recognized as a school that promotes instructional improvement and excellence. Through the Riordan Foundation, we were given the opportunity to place 18 IBM computers and the accompanying software for the IBM Writing to Read program in our first grades. Staff development was provided on how to integrate that program with whole language instruction. It works! Those classrooms are language-rich and technology-rich learning environments, where parent volunteers have been trained to support teachers. As part of another grant, teachers in grades two through six received instruction in the LEGO/Logo constructivist program. Children throughout the school, construct Lego creations, activated by the LOGO programming they have learned.

Diversity is respected at Grove Avenue, and there is an emphasis on multicultural understanding. A child's behavior is often the result of

the school climate and the environment in which the child is required to function. School climate has an effect on teachers and other staff as well. Early in our transformation, a team of teachers and the principal participated in an eight-day training for team building and school climate improvement through the Northeast Regional Center for Drug Free Schools and Communities (NERC). There were subsequent expansion weekend sessions for other teachers and community researchers. School climate improvement at Grove involves maintaining the physical appearance of our buildings with plants and flowers, inside and out. Positive learning environments for children are the result of positive working environments for teachers. Support is given for faculty and staff to collaborate and plan together, and parents and families are partners. Grove Avenue School is committed to the notion of lifelong learning for all — students, teachers, pre-service teachers, staff, and families. We are a Teaching/Learning Community!

Part of the commitment to being a Governor's School was the assurance that we would network with community and social service agencies to support our programs, and we have done so very effectively through a series of opportunities which, when grouped together, provide an extraordinary amount of service to our children. Rhode Island College (RIC) has provided the most important partnership with our school. As a Professional Development School (PDS) with the college, Grove offers an opportunity for college students to learn about schooling in a diverse setting and allows our children and families to learn about college. Programs such as our *Making a Habit of College*, which take children to the college each year beginning in grade one, teach them *about* college. In addition to great chocolate chip cookies, the children remember the math and science lessons taught by a college faculty member. Powerful learning experiences! Prior to the college connection, most of our families never even considered college to be in their children's futures. Now, because of the important role that college students and faculty play in the fabric of our school community, college is an option that our children will consider.

Grove/RIC offers tutoring programs of all kinds — after-school tutoring for grades four through six; in-school tutoring for grades one through three; and after-Grove tutoring for junior high school students who still enjoy the support of caring adults in a nurturing environment. Student nurses participate in health screenings and with students in well-children case studies. Some of the college stu-

dents assist in the production of the *Grove Avenue News*, the Family Center newsletter, published monthly in English and Portuguese. All of the events involving families, from PTA to the SBM Council to the Family Center, are publicized and promoted in this publication.

During the initial year of our restructuring, Grove Avenue School became a charter member of the Institute for Responsive Education's *League of Schools Reaching Out*, which was established to show the effectiveness of school-based support programs for children and their families, particularly for those children determined to be "at risk." Our relationship with the League has provided a wealth of information and research in school/family partnerships.

In 1990 Grove Avenue School became a partner school with the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands. This offered us the first opportunity to begin to meet and network with other schools committed to systemic change. We have been involved in all of the major conferences and networks. The most effective effort for us has been the Urban Working Party (UWP). The UWP sessions, which focused on sharing achievements, disappointments, barriers, and triumphs of participating school communities, provided powerful learning experiences, which we brought back to our own community.

Early in the Urban Working Party, Grove decided to begin to collaborate with community agencies to provide family support programs on site. Through funding from the Governor's Schools grant, we were providing limited school-based counseling services by a licensed MSW, who is bilingual. While the service was effective, it was costly, and changing needs resulted in continuous reductions in monies available for the social worker. We began a dialogue with East Bay Mental Health, the community mental health agency with whom the district has several contracts. While they were receptive to providing school-based service, as a non-profit agency, they had no funding to support the idea.

Another major connection that Grove Avenue made was with the Children's Crusade for Higher Education, a program offered by the state of Rhode Island, which encourages children to stay in school, remain drug-free, and generally succeed in school. At the third grade, children and families sign a "contract" in which they agree to the aforementioned in return for the promise of a college education. Support services, such as tutoring and mentoring programs, are

offered to the Crusaders. We are in the fourth year of participation, and nearly all of our students who have been at Grove during their recruitment year are members. Our success as a Crusade tutoring and mentoring site has led to our receiving an AmeriCorps grant to increase participation for Crusaders in a mentoring program.

It is difficult to determine where the Family Center and the school begin and end. They form a tightly woven fabric of support for the entire school program. Grove Avenue School is the Family Center and the heart of the Family Center is the Community Room. From the weekly coffee hour, which has met every Friday for five years, to a family sewing workshop to Family Center and site-based management council meetings, family members of all ages have been welcomed into the school. Parents enjoy their involvement in the school, and children are proud of their parents' visibility. Families have the opportunity to socialize and provide meaningful support for their children's education. Often parents themselves are motivated to continue their own education. What a wonderful celebration our school community held when one of our moms received her GED! She was proud and so were we!

Families have a role in the governance of our school. Membership on the SBM Council has evolved to fifteen, including six family members, four teachers, one support staff member, two college professors, a business representative, and the principal. The decision-making process we use is consensus, with the principal serving as an equal participant. Through our SBM Council we have developed and implemented school/family programs. We employ a part-time multilingual outreach worker and a Family Center coordinator. They provide support for families by connecting them with needed community services and serve as liaisons with school staff.

The Grove Avenue School community took advantage of another state grant, the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ) grant, which provides funding and technical assistance in developing community and social service agency connections to bring services on site. Grove Avenue has connected with two other elementary schools that are adjacent to each other, and who share many characteristics, attributes, and needs. Grove, Orlo, and Whiteknact Schools have worked together during the past year to develop family partnerships. We worked cooperatively to conduct needs assessments of our families through surveys in English and Portuguese and through local focus groups. Grove extended the work of our Family

Center while Orlo and Whiteknact Schools have created Family Centers within their schools. All of the Family Centers function under a three-school umbrella. Each school offers school-based services unique to its needs and shares in others so as not to duplicate services. During the development of our project, Grove participated in the Urban Working Party visits to Bridgeport and New Haven, which influenced our work.

Another need for families is adult education. ESL and Pre-GED classes are held at Grove in the St. Francis Xavier building. These classes, which had been held at the high school, have been moved to our site, and while our families comprise the largest membership group, participation is open to any city resident. It was our goal to make the classes more accessible to the families and staff members of all three schools. These classes are free of charge. We tried unsuccessfully to offer computer keyboarding and conversational Portuguese, for which there would have been a fee, but we were forced to cancel for lack of sufficient enrollment. In the next semester, we intend to offer those courses again, and we are exploring the possibility of asking community agencies, such as local churches, to assist in providing "scholarships" to families in need.

The Family Center coordinators of the three schools meet frequently to share ideas, to plan programs, and to offer support to one another. They also attend city Drug Free Task Force meetings and bring information back to the schools. Members of the school planning teams have also participated in information and training sessions offered by the state.

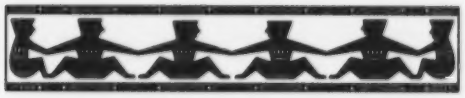
One of the most important goals of our Family Center effort is to offer opportunities for children and family members to enjoy fun activities together. The Family Center conducted a survey to determine those activities that families would most enjoy. In November, we had our first event for Grove Avenue families — family bowling on a Saturday. The local bowling alley worked with the Family Center coordinator to offer a reasonable price for bowling and lunch. More than fifty family members participated, and for some it was the first time bowling. We captured the fun on camera, and we will display the pictures in the Community Room and in other prominent areas of the school to encourage participation in future events.

As a support for family participation in meetings, planning sessions, classes, and other activities, the Family Center provides "babysitting"

services. Parents are their children's first teachers. They deserve respect and deference and have a right to full partnership with the school. It is the hope of the Grove Avenue School community to be able to provide as many school-based services as families need, while remaining attentive to the need to balance family support with family involvement. Families have so many strengths to offer, and it is up to the school to find ways for those strengths to be utilized.

How do we know that we are making a difference? What evaluation methods are we employing? We know that serious discipline problems have declined considerably, and now when students act out in frustration and anger about family problems, we are able to offer support for their emotional needs. However, we needed a better measure of our progress. The Governor's Schools Program provided funding in 1993-94 for the Laboratory to evaluate our program. The evaluator developed survey instruments for families, students, and school staff and conducted interviews with school community members. The evaluation concluded that achievement for sixth graders has been improving steadily, while achievement at the third grade level is more variable. Generally, teachers and family members have high regard for the diverse programs we offer, and families feel involved in the school. Recommendations include improving communication with families, examination of the SBM process to increase teacher participation, systematic evaluations of all existing programs, and development of a long-range strategic plan.

The great challenge presented to school communities is to sustain momentum for change. Grants become more difficult to secure, and thus far, school transformation has relied heavily on the volunteer efforts of members of the school community. Clearly, we need more time! Educators need time to learn and to collaborate with each other and with other school community members to plan and implement programs. We must capture the needed time to maintain meaningful school/family/community partnerships. Unfortunately, time is money, and family involvement programs must often compete with regular programs for existing funding. It appears that funding may become even more competitive, so a critical mass of schools committed to systematic change, must celebrate and publicize successes in order for us to continue to move forward.



Joseph J. Hurley Elementary School
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Prepared by: Debbie Porter, teacher
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The Joseph J. Hurley Elementary School is located in the South End of Boston. The student population is 66% Hispanic, 30% African American, 3% White and 1% Indian American. We have a two-way bilingual program for two thirds of our students.

In the fall of 1991, the superintendent of Boston Public Schools mandated that all schools write and implement a three year educational plan with no additional funding. Through this process, the faculty determined that there was a lack of social and psychological services. At that time the needs consisted of:

- On-site counseling for students
- Parent outreach
- Health care services

At that time our existing services consisted of:

- A mentor counseling program available to children only, and dependent on their health insurance carrier
- Boston Public School psychologists available to screen children for special education
- A part-time nurse

In addition, parental involvement was low. Recognizing these needs, the staff and principal wanted to become vehicles for change. In the fall of 1992, the district mandated that Student Support Teams be set up in every school. We formed a team and met every Monday

after school. At this time we also began a hands-on science program with parent volunteers.

In the Winter of 1993, we were invited to join the Urban Working Party (UWP). Laboratory staff assisted us by providing resources and networking us with other schools who had experience integrating social services. These resources aided us in implementing our first steps.

At that time there was an increased number of student referrals to special education for both social and academic concerns. Due to what we learned through attending the UWP, we realized the importance of providing in-school services to meet both the academic and social needs of our students.

We then distributed health insurance surveys to all our students. We used the survey results to determine the most frequently used health care providers and social service agencies in the community. Visits to these community agencies were set up to discuss possibilities of on-site services to our children and their families. A workshop for parents on "Keeping Our Children Safe" was set up at school by personnel from Boston City Hospital. These connections with community agencies began our relationship of working together.

We held meetings to reorganize our Student Support Teams (SST) so they would consist of school and community agencies. Through a collaboration with the South End Mental Health Center, the Institute for Child and Adolescent Development joined the Hurley School SST. By September, 1993, our SST consisted of:

- The Institute for Child and Adolescent Development (ICAD)
- A pediatrician from Boston City Hospital
- A psychologist from South End Health Clinic
- School personnel — principal, evaluation team leader, the referring teacher, the lead teacher, school nurse, and school pupil adjustment counselor.

Parents, also, were invited to each SST meeting. The meetings were held during the school day with substitute coverage provided for classroom teachers. Every case was reviewed on a monthly basis. Inservice training was held for the school faculty to meet SST members and learn about procedures for completing the referral form developed by and for the SST.

As members of the SST at the Hurley, ICAD staff have been very active in making available services to students, parents, and faculty. All services have been provided free of charge during the regularly scheduled school day and on school grounds.

Children referred by the SST were evaluated by ICAD. Of the 50 students referred by teachers to the SST during the 1993/94 academic year, 18 (36%) were provided services by ICAD. Each of the 18 students assigned received an extensive diagnostic evaluation. This evaluation consisted of careful testing of intelligence, personality, and cognition. In addition, each child was interviewed to learn what troubled the child. With several children, the interview took place with the teacher present. If the child's preferred language was Spanish, a bilingual interviewer was present. The evaluations were conducted by a team of examiners, both female and male, over a period of several weeks. The results of the evaluations were shared with classroom teachers, and/or school principal, and with parents.

The pediatrician's role on the team was as a liaison between the school and the medical profession. She was able to provide door-to-door transportation for asthmatic children who had high absenteeism. She provided valuable health information. She also made contacts with children's physicians to clarify medical information.

In addition, three psychologists from the South End Clinic were assigned to the Hurley School. These psychologists reflected the racial and cultural backgrounds of our students. One psychologist sat on the SST while the other two provided direct services to our students and their families.

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La Nueva Escuela (the New School) is an urban kindergarten through ninth grade school attended by approximately 250 students and located in a poor, working class neighborhood in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. The school has a very special history and works in innovative ways to achieve the best possible quality of education. The school works on the concept of building an integrated, family-based, holistic organization, centered around the needs and the strengths of our children. This philosophy distinguishes La Nueva Escuela from other schools with similar populations. In order to better understand our experience concerning the development of "La Casa Familiar," a pro-family, integrated service center, it is important to take a brief look at the school's history.

Juan Domingo, the barrio where the school is located has a long history, approximately 25 years, of active organization and community dialogue. In 1987 the school was closed down by the government. This action had a very negative impact on the community. Gangs began to appear, children dropped out of the new schools they were sent to or skipped school, and parents began to worry about the outcome of such a situation. Facing these problems, the community of Juan Domingo formed a coalition and began to pressure the government to demand that the school be reopened.

La Nueva Escuela was rescued and reopened in 1990. The entire community, with a couple of parent-leaders at the head, was mobilized in a massive effort to gather all the materials and the work

force necessary in order to rebuild the physical structure and make it functional once again. La Nueva Escuela was born of and relies on the consistent participation of parents and other community members. Several parents work in the school. They are present in all aspects of school life, including the administrative and educational process, curriculum development, discipline, and protection of the school's surroundings.

All of the school's accomplishments have been attained through collaborative efforts. It is common practice at the school to make important decisions in a consensual manner and through a dialogue that includes the voice of parents, teachers, and students. Our philosophy places the child at the center of this dialogue: How can we improve each child's quality of life? Our daily responsibility is to remain active and involved in this collaborative and humanist effort, to build a school around the needs and demands of our children.

We understand that students are not isolated individuals who leave their communities, families, realities, and experiences behind when they enter the classroom. For this reason we do not address the children in academic terms only. It happens too often that children arrive at school weighed-down and confused as a result of the socio-emotional issues that they deal with on a daily basis and are consequently unable to perform according to their academic potential. Almost 60% of our children are not raised by both parents. They carry the "absence" of someone they love or need to love. They need help, the kind of help that transcends the academic agenda, or even better, that transforms the academic agenda.

We believe that students' academic experiences cannot be separated from their lives as individuals, as children growing up in an increasingly confusing and threatening society. In order for children to develop and learn efficiently, they must be able to depend on a certain amount of stability and good health. Too often we find students, as well as parents, who suffer from serious health problems as a result of unbalanced diets, poor nutrition education, and failure to take preventive health measures. A great number of children are not well cared for or live in unstable and conflictive households. Too often we find students whose behavior at school is disruptive and antisocial as a consequence of one or both of these situations.

Ever since the school reopened its doors, parents, teachers, students, and other community members have united in efforts to deal with

these problems and find positive and workable solutions. Our neighborhood benefits to a great extent from the fact that for many years there have existed close bonds among neighbors. You might call it an "underground" network of support, especially among the women of the community. Although in an informal manner, many of the conflicts and problems that arise in given families or with the children are dealt with through the guidance and help of another, who is a neighbor as well as friend and colleague.

We have seen substantial changes and improvement in individuals as well as in the quality of our school life. There are considerably fewer fights and crisis situations, GPA's have risen, and there is a fairly constant feeling of peace, calmness, and stability on the school grounds. Nevertheless, after three years of meaningful achievement, we still feel the challenge of addressing the needs of all our students and their families. La Casa Familiar responds to that challenge.

La Casa Familiar grew out of at least three sources. First, it grew out of the conversations of community members, who historically have played a key role in identifying and verbalizing their needs. The dialogues included weekly meetings of mothers who work in the school as volunteers or paid staff; circles of dialogue among parents, teachers, and students; and workshops organized by the school. At an all-staff evaluation meeting at the end of the 1993-94 school year, teachers and parents brought up the need for a place where a few staff members could work full time on issues concerning the improvement of the quality of life of our students and their families. A couple of mothers had the idea of a house with open doors, where members of different families come together, a place for dialogue, easily accessible to parents, teachers, and students seeking solutions to their problems.

Second, La Casa Familiar also grew out of more formal methods of assessing needs to guide our efforts. We had surveys and questionnaires that provided information on academic achievement, living arrangements, socioeconomic status, behavior, and discipline.

Third, the Urban Working Party (UWP) provided an opportunity to participating school staff and parents to engage in an ongoing dialogue with other urban schools in Puerto Rico and the Northeast that shared similar concerns. This dialogue helped us shape our ideas. It helped us define and understand the problem better and to clarify some of the causes; consider various strategies for respond-

ing to the problem; and develop specific plans of action. Framing the discussion as an urban issue helped us focus on questions such as: What happens to children and families in urban settings? How do they face a sense of rootlessness? What is the importance of the urban setting and its issues on the school setting? How much should those issues be a part of the academic agenda?

The UWP visit to the Luis Muñoz Marin School in Bridgeport, CT was very important for us. It allowed us to come into a setting that faces similar problems to ours. We saw how the issues were put out on the table and addressed and taken care of through the support of many agencies. As we observed the group and the way they worked, we developed strategies for adapting their approach to our own situation.

In addition to the UWP formal dialogues and visits, the informal dialogues were very important to us. For three or four days we had the opportunity to work, talk, and brainstorm with colleagues during meals, in the evening, on the airplane, late at night. These intense brainstorm sessions helped us develop strong ideas.

In the summer of 1994 we began to act on our concept of La Casa Familiar, and a team was designated to work on the project. We wanted the project to be based on our needs and our strengths. The community has important strengths: strong relationships between teachers and parents; strong women that do a lot of peer counseling on their own and help each other with tasks of childrearing; strong ties among neighbors; personal relationships we have learned to develop with people from different social service agencies; organizational skills, from small one-to-one efforts to larger community-wide groups; and a strong and well structured school supported by, and a part of, the community.

The idea of La Casa Familiar relates to our culture and reality. Mothers would like an actual house for the site, "a house like one of the houses of the community." The message they want to project is: school and barrio are one. We organized a roundtable of representatives from public social service agencies to discuss various situations, come up with solutions, and set deadlines. Drawing on previous experiences with public agencies, we included child psychiatrists and other experts in our roundtable to help us create a sense of urgency and show the consequences of delaying help on issues such as health, housing, and special education.

Since we come from a history of community empowerment, we organize and develop La Casa Familiar around this principle: to empower mothers, fathers, children, and the young to deal with their lives in better ways. How do we educate ourselves to meet the different needs in our lives and in our homes? What do we need to know? Where do we learn it? What are our rights? What services are available?

During the summer we developed a substantial proposal to generate funds to get started. Our first proposal was rejected but a second, smaller one was approved in November, 1994. The mission of La Casa Familiar is to provide each child with the best possible quality of life. We understand that in order for this to happen, our work should begin by strengthening the bonds between the family and the child as well as the nation and the child. As members of an immediate circle of people called family and as members of a larger community called society, we believe that each child has a right to receive the best possible attention and care in order to fully develop his or her potential.

We understand that there are three basic needs that should be addressed in order to support and give continuity to the efforts and achievements of those individuals who have already been working for years toward this goal.

In the first place, there is a need to establish strong links between our community and public service organizations. We set out on a two-way road. On the one hand we seek to educate these organizations on how to successfully reach individuals and their families and to deal with their needs/problems in rapid and efficient ways. On the other hand it is our goal to empower parents and youngsters, to support them in the process of finding the resources and receiving the education necessary for becoming independent and self-sufficient individuals.

Secondly, there is a need for training programs for individuals who now serve in informal ways as teachers, social workers, and counselors. The training would help them make their interactions with other community members more efficient and professional.

Finally, there is the need to build the physical structure that will facilitate the organization, coordination, and evaluation of services to the community. Our vision of this house is of a comfortable and

inviting space where people can continue to meet, exchange ideas, and find support in times of trouble. It is impossible to separate the concept of La Casa Familiar from the daily work at the school.

The design for our program has its roots in the very concept that underlies La Nueva Escuela: to offer each participant, student, teacher, and parent the opportunity of fully realizing his or her potential and to help individuals become accomplished human beings and productive citizens, capable of healthy relationships, and with the capacity to work and to actively participate in the democratic process.

La Casa Familiar is built around two structures that work together. One is the house of the Family Center itself, located inside the school grounds and open to all community members. The second is "La Mesa Redonda," or roundtable, which meets once a month at the school to discuss the most urgent problems and situations that confront our students and their families and works together on building strategies, prevention programs, and alternatives to improve each student's daily life. La Mesa Redonda invites and brings together staff from La Casa Familiar, public service agencies, and community based organizations to develop and establish continuing and beneficial collaborations. By working together we wish to aid one another and to accelerate whatever process needs to occur to have each student living a healthy and peaceful life both in and out of school.

The first meeting of the roundtable took place in October, 1994. It was well attended and very successful. There were representatives from the local government, mental health programs, Housing Department, local health center, Sacred Heart University, other non-profit organizations, private professions who work closely with the school, and the Laboratory. Those who were present expressed enthusiasm about the project and committed themselves to attending a monthly, two hour meeting. Each member is encouraged to bring ideas, plans, and information about existing resources and how to best use them.

Two workshops sponsored by La Casa Familiar have taken place during the last two months. The first was offered by La Comisión Para Asuntos de la Mujer, a government advocacy agency for women's issues. It was very successful and participants expressed the need for more events that provide opportunities to learn and discuss issues that are part of their daily lives, and that often are not

faced nor shared. The second was a parent's workshop offered by Diana Rivera, a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, focusing on whole language, what it means, why our teachers use it, its benefits for children in their learning process, and how parents could become more involved. We had hoped for more participants. Those who did come shared their views and expressed their interest for more events of this sort. We also discussed the best times to schedule workshops so that more parents could attend. The next one will be offered in the early evening, and child care will be available.

There are many questions that still need to be answered: When will the physical structure be in place? What funds will we have available? What legal issues will we face? How large is this project? What other resources may be available? How are we going to ensure and keep confidentiality? How can we work to empower the individual and the community?

For some of these questions, we will probably find an answer soon. Others will always be present, spurring us to evaluate, re-think, explore, and continue with our work. New questions will certainly appear and challenge us.

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Veazie Street Elementary School exists in an urban setting and affects 650 school aged children, kindergarten through grade five, and their families. It is part of an inner-city school system that is presently involved in system-wide restructuring efforts. These efforts address the educational, social, and developmental needs of the community at-large. Our school reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the city of Providence, Rhode Island.

VISION

Children and their families are of paramount importance to the betterment of the community and critical to educational success. In order to better educate the "whole child," the Veazie Street Family Center attempts to meet the needs of its families. The goal of the Family Center is to develop a partnership between the school and its families that will enhance the learning process. To develop a viable partnership, the needs of the child's family must be considered.

The purpose of the Family Center is to support families. The Family Center reflects cultural and linguistic differences and strives to celebrate the ethnicity our community has to offer. It attempts to meet the needs of our diverse population by integrating social services within the school. This integration is a collaboration with community social service agencies, parents, school administration, teachers, students, staff, businesses, and community members. This collaboration takes place with the primary needs of our children as its focus.

HISTORY

In 1992 the Providence School System opened the Veazie Street Elementary School in response to the need for school reform. Parental and community involvement were key elements in the vision, planning, development, and governance of the school. Evidence of our administration's commitment to this involvement was apparent when a room was designated, during the initial planning phase, as the Family Center. Furthermore, and most importantly, parents were to play a part in the decision-making process. With these pieces in place, the Family Center concept was conceived.

Veazie Street School was established with a planning committee that would be responsible for overseeing programming. The planning committee consisted of a union in-service coordinator, an assistant superintendent, the director of programming and staff, the principal, five teachers, six parents, two community representatives, and one representative from Higher Education. The teachers and parents were interviewed for positions on the committee, and the others were chosen for their knowledge, interest, and expertise. At the beginning of the committee's third year, the committee changed in order to assure more diversity in styles, cultures, and levels of expertise. It was hoped that this new design would bring about new values, ideas, and perspectives through a variety of methods, techniques, and plans of action. The change also reflected the need of the faculty and staff to develop a democratic process by which members could be nominated and elected. Original team members had been interviewed and chosen by administrators and the principal. Faculty, staff, and parents felt that they should be involved in the selection of members, since they would be immediately affected by the committee's decisions.

DEVELOPMENT

Veazie Street School has been open for three years. The planning team — the governing body — has had a different configuration each year. We are one of the few schools in the system that is experimenting with school-site management. These changes have had tremendous impact on the Family Center development. Within the first year, a Family Center committee was established for fear of losing the designated space. Goals, objectives, and a mission statement for the Family Center were written. In order to determine the needs of our population, we distributed needs assessments to parents, faculty, and students (see pages 50-51). The information received was

documented and presented to the planning team. Based on the results, the Family Center offered two informational workshops, which were attended by many parents. As participants in the Laboratory's Urban Working Party (UWP), our work in this first year was affirmed, and we became inspired to continue our commitment to our families.

During the second year, we formed a 27-member Family Center committee that we divided into four sub-committees: educational program, library resource, evaluation, and arts and crafts. We elected a new set of co-chairs to include one parent and one teacher. At the same time, the family school support team expanded to include a multi-disciplinary team. This group is a stable force for our work with families and includes two counselors, the principal, the school nurse, a school psychologist, two social workers, a special education resource teacher, and a speech pathologist. Some of these people are involved with the Family Center committee as well.

During the second year, a health club for children and their parents was implemented, a cooking club was established, and a sex education workshop was held. We also sponsored a Family Math/Science night that allowed parents and their children to explore mathematical and scientific concepts through hands-on activities. In addition, we celebrated a family arts week in conjunction with the Rhode Island School of Design. The Family Center was officially opened in the spring of 1994 at a ceremony which was attended by members of the school community, the mayor, parents, and administrators.

As our third year began, the structure of the schoolwide improvement team impacted the function and direction of the Family Center committee. Faculty and parents drained from previous years were reluctant to commit to extra hours for meeting and planning, but were interested in assisting with specific activities on a short term basis.

REALITIES

Roles

One should realize right from the start that a clear definition of parental involvement needs to be established. It is important to consider what role parents play in the school, what role they will play in their child's education, and what role the faculty and staff will play. Problems arose because parents and teachers were unsure of the extent of their involvement.

Space

It is important to consider space when creating a Family Center. This space needs to be exclusively for parents and children in order to insure ownership. It must be established at the onset and equipped with materials and supplies necessary for whatever program activities will occur there. It is not necessary to add on rooms. Be creative with the space that is available. You may have to give and take in order to get what you want. Once the space has been secured, it is crucial to make those in the building aware of its purpose. Although space was not an issue at Veazie because the Family Center space was included in the initial planning of the school, maintaining the space and its condition has been an ongoing struggle.

Awareness

It is important from the onset to inform faculty, staff, and parents of the intentions and possibilities of the Family Center. It is not necessary to get everyone involved. However it is necessary to keep all informed to insure validity and respect for the intentions of a Family Center.

Originally the purpose of the Family Center was not made clear to faculty and staff at Veazie, and therefore the room was being used for activities that did not involve families. The Family Center committee made friendly attempts to keep the faculty informed through memos and announcements while being careful not to cause dissension. For the most part these attempts were successful, however the struggle to preserve the space is ongoing.

Time

Realistic time constraints should also take precedence. Planning and organizing Family Center activities can be time consuming in the beginning. It is important to keep meetings at a productive level. At Veazie, inspired teachers quickly became overwhelmed and exhausted when weekly meetings became unproductive. Meetings should be held only when planning and implementing specific activities rather than on a regular basis.

Staffing

In order to create a viable Family Center it is ideal to have a person on staff who is charged with running the Family Center. This allows members of the Family Center to concentrate on planning and securing funding. It will also keep energy levels high if the workload is evenly distributed. Staffing seems to be a stumbling block for us at Veazie, along with the issue of funding.

Funding

Another enormous task in developing a Family Center is the issue of funding. It is critical to determine how to receive funding and where to spend it most effectively. Grants, whether from local, national, or private sectors, are essential tools in helping to fuel the development and ongoing progress of a Family Center. This is a stage that will be revisited repeatedly. Grant writing is time consuming, yet worthwhile when the reward of receiving funding becomes a reality. At Veazie, our attempts were roadblocked when teachers became overextended in their time commitments. As a new school, our commitments were divided between the Family Center and other important school activities. Grant writing has become a priority of the Family Center committee.

Documentation

Documentation is key when determining the success of specific programs and activities being offered in the Family Center. It validates efforts and creates an awareness of the Family Center. It is also crucial when seeking funding in the form of grants and when attempting to secure funding from within your school district. It can be as simple as keeping logs, photo albums, attendance records, and program evaluations. However, formal evaluation is also necessary.

Resources

Making connections with others who value and support your commitment to families is an invaluable resource. Our involvement with the Laboratory and their commitment to educational improvement has continually validated and reaffirmed our efforts within our school building. The Laboratory was able to connect us with teachers, parents, administrators, and social workers from other schools, which enabled us to share experiences and redevelop our progress in shaping our Family Center.

STUDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Below are some of the comments children made in response to the question: How do you feel about parents being in the school to learn? Their reasons for feeling the way they do will help us determine how to approach the development of after- and before-school programs for families.

"I would like it a little." (7-year-old)

"I'd feel sad for them because they didn't know how to learn." (7-year-old)

"Difficult . . . Parents don't belong at school!!" (7-year-old)

"No, because they should go to school with people their age." (11-year-old)

"I would say no because they would embarrass me." (11-year-old)

"I would not mind if they did." (7-year-old)

"Happy, it's my school." (7-year-old)

"Great, my dad sometimes forgets things he learns." (7-year-old)

"I want my mom to read." (7-year-old)

"I would like that and when I need help I can ask my mom to help me. We would have fun." (11-year-old)

"I would just feel great and I would probably be smarter." (11-year-old)

"I will feel equal." (11-year-old)

"I think its ok as long as they don't bother me." (11-year-old)

"I would feel angry if they were at my school but if it was college, that would be good because everyone should get an education." (11-year-old)

"I would feel embarrassed because people would think they do not know anything." (11-year-old)

"It would feel good if my parents could come to my school. My mom's going to school in September." (10-year-old)

"I would feel embarrassed because they are too big." (10-year-old)

"I would feel wonderful." (9-year-old)

"Weird because that means they don't have an education." (9-year-old)

"I'd feel weird because they already graduated and went through school. Why go back?" (9-year-old)

"I would like it because my mom would learn a little more. (9-year-old)

"I will be embarrassed and I will lock myself in the bathroom forever." (9-year-old)

"I would feel fantastic!" (9-year-old)

"Sad because I would like to be alone." (6-year-old)

"That's crazy!" (6-year-old)

"I would feel very disappointed." (8-year-old)

"I will be the happiest kid on earth." (8-year-old)

"I will go coo coo and crazy." (8-year-old)

"No thank you." (8-year-old)

Some children stated, in no uncertain terms, that they would absolutely hate coming to school that early or leaving that late. As one student wrote: "I want to go home at the regular time!!"

As is evident in the responses to the survey, some children are clearly ready and willing to participate with their parents while others are unsure. It would be beneficial to question these children after programs have been implemented.

Appendix A

Suggested Readings

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Appendix B

Activity to Develop and Practice Critical Inquiry Skills
Developed by the Laboratory for the Urban Working Party

Step 1: Forming Groups *(5 minutes)*
Participants need to choose an important school-related issue that they are currently working on and then join with a partner from another school (so that the dialogue for this activity will be free from prior knowledge of the issue and the context). Each pair then joins with another pair to form a group of four. The group should arbitrarily assign each pair a letter: "A" or "B."

Step 2: Summarizing and Framing the Issue *(5 minutes)*
Person #1 in pair A begins by summarizing his or her issue and ends by asking two questions that help frame the inquiry. Person #2 in pair A listens to the summary and questions.

Step 3: Clarifying the Issue through Inquiry *(10 minutes)*
The inquiry phase now begins as person #2 asks questions and seeks clarifying statements to help him or her understand the issue and, most importantly, to help person #1 move toward a clearer understanding of the issue and how it's been framed by his or her two questions. The individuals in pair B are not part of this dialogue but act as process observers, taking notes about the dialogue, which will be shared in the debrief that follows.

Step 4: Sharing Process Observation Comments *(5 minutes)*
When the dialogue in step 3 is finished, pair B offers two or three comments about the interaction of pair A, e.g., to what extent the questioning style was helpful; whether the questions helped to expand, reframe, or redefine the issue; which parts of the dialogue didn't work and why.

Step 5: Repeating the Cycle
The partners in pair A now switch roles and repeat the activity with pair B continuing in their role of process observers. Once pair A has finished their inquiry, they switch roles with pair B and become the process observers for pair B's inquiry. Thus, steps 2-4 are repeated four times so that each person has an opportunity to be the issue framer, the inquirer, and a process observer.

Appendix C

Urban Working Party Participants

Connecticut

Annie Fisher School
280 Plainfield Street
Hartford, CT 06112
Ron Calloway, social worker
Joanne Etter, teacher
Sonja Hall, parent, paraprofessional
Jean Kurth-Zubretsky, teacher, parent
Vivian Richardson, principal
Geneva Williams, teacher

Clinton Avenue Language Academy
293 Clinton Avenue
New Haven, CT 06513
Miriam Camacho, principal
Emma Pinette, teacher
Colleen Revillini, teacher

Christopher Columbus Family Education Academy
255 Blatchley Avenue
New Haven, CT 06513
Hilda Candelaria, teacher
Betty Lawrence, administrator
Elaine Parsons, teacher, administrator
Luz Nelly Tobon, teacher
Marta Vasquez, teacher

Maine

Jack Elementary School
414 Eastern Promenade
Portland, ME 04101
Myrt Collins, principal
Ann Marie Demers, teacher
Kathy Marshack, teacher, administrator
Cindy Rotolo, teacher
Kathy Sabath, parent coordinator

Massachusetts

Barbieri Elementary School
100 Dudley Road
Framingham, MA 01701
Evangeline Cancel, teacher
Peter Dittami, principal
Hortensia Emanuel, administrator
Minerva Gonzalez, teacher
Iris Zaki, psychologist

Joseph J. Hurley Elementary School
70 Worcester Street
Boston, MA 02118
Alma Aldebol, parent
Barbara Ditzian, teacher
Miriam Hernandez, principal
Debbie Porter, teacher

New York

PS/IS 332, Charles Hamilton Houston School
51 Christopher Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11212
Richard Placente, principal
Gabrielle Thomas, administrator
Toni Weinstein, teacher, administrator

CS 61, Francisco Oller School
1550 Crotona Park, East
Bronx, NY 10460
Elaine Samuels, teacher
Althea Serrant, principal
Ken Thomas, teacher

Lorraine Academy
71 Lorraine Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14220
Mark Frasier, teacher
Don Griffith, teacher
Allison Hall, teacher
Bridgette Marren, teacher
Joel Weiss, principal

Van Corlaer Elementary School
2300 Guilderland Avenue
Schenectedy, NY 12306
Theresa Kennedy, social worker
Virginia Kichton, teacher
Rosemarie McLean, teacher

Puerto Rico

Escuela Dr. Antonio S. Pedreira
Calle Argel, Esquina Andorra
Puerto Nuevo, PR 00920
María Isabel Batista, principal
Luisa de Leon, teacher
Gigi Dimicelli, teacher

Escuela Elemental de la Universidad de Puerto Rico
P.O. Box 23324
UPR Station
Rio Piedras, PR 00931-9998
Héctor Claudio, psychologist
Anita Quiñones, teacher
Aura Ramírez, principal
María Ruiz, teacher

La Nueva Escuela Juan Ponce de León
55 Los Robles Street
Juan Domingo Sector
Guaynabo, PR 00966
Marisol Cordero, teacher
Isabel Córdova, teacher
Frances Fernandez, teacher
Ana M. García Blanco, principal
Aura Gonzales, teacher
William Ríos, teacher
Aura Rodriguez, teacher

Rhode Island

George J. West Elementary School
145 Beaufort Street
Providence, RI 02908
Barbara Ashby, librarian

Grove Avenue Governor's School
100 Grove Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914
Ana Montiero, teacher
Susan Quattrucci, teacher
Diane Santos, principal

Veazie Street Elementary School
211 Veazie Street
Providence, RI 02904
Denise Carpenter, teacher
Carrie Glen, teacher
Maureen Richie, teacher

Laboratory Staff

Linda Clark
Efrain Fuentes
Jon Kaiser
Lori Mitchell
Marla Pérez-Sellés
Rosa Santiago-Marazzi

When students can't concentrate on their studies because of worries about mom not finding a job or brothers dropping out to join the corner gang, many urban educators look for ways to help stabilize the students' family lives. They show families where to go — or provide places at the school — for adult job training, psychological counseling, substance abuse treatment, and family counseling.

Hand in Hand: How Nine Urban Schools Work with Families and Community Services shows how a group of urban educators is working to bring stability to families so that students receive the opportunity and support they need to succeed in school. Each of nine urban schools report on the challenges and victories they have encountered while establishing Family Centers and bringing social services to their schools. These schools are part of a professional network of urban schools begun and facilitated by the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands.

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